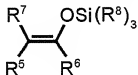


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

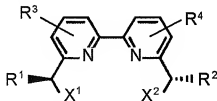
1. (Previously presented) A method for producing an optically active hydroxymethylated compound, comprising reacting a silicon enolate and formaldehyde, in the presence of a catalyst, in an aqueous solution or a mixed solvent of water and an organic solvent,

wherein the silicon enolate is represented by the following formula:



wherein  $\text{R}^5$  represents a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group and  $\text{R}^6$  represents an alkyl group, a phenyl group, a benzyl group, a phenyl ethyl group, or a phenyl vinyl group, or wherein  $\text{R}^5$  and  $\text{R}^6$  may together with the carbon atoms to which they are bonded form an indene, 1,2-dihydronaphthylene, cyclohexene, cycloheptene or cyclopentene ring,  $\text{R}^7$  represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, a phenyl group, a benzyl group, a phenyl ethyl group, or a phenyl vinyl group, and the  $\text{R}^8$  groups, which may be identical or different, are each alkyl groups, and

the catalyst is obtained by mixing a ligand or its symmetric isomer and a Lewis acid, wherein the ligand is represented by the following formula:

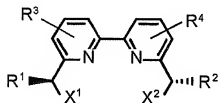


wherein each  $\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  group, which may be identical or different, is an alkyl group, provided that at least one of  $\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  contains at least three carbon atoms, the  $\text{R}^3$  and  $\text{R}^4$  groups, which may be identical or different, are each hydrogen atoms, alkyl groups containing one to four carbon atoms or alkoxy groups, the  $\text{X}^1$  and  $\text{X}^2$  groups, which may be identical or different, are each  $-\text{OH}$  or  $-\text{OMe}$ , and

the Lewis acid is represented by  $MY_n$ , wherein M is Cu, Zn, Fe, Sc or a lanthanoid element, Y is a halogen atom, OAc,  $OCOCF_3$ ,  $ClO_4$ ,  $SbF_6$ ,  $PF_6$  or  $OSO_2CF_3$  and n is 2 or 3.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Withdrawn – currently amended) A catalyst obtained by mixing a ligand or its symmetric isomer and a Lewis acid, wherein the ligand is represented by the following formula (chemical formula 1):



wherein each  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  group, which may be identical or different, is an alkyl group, provided at least one of  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  contains at least three carbon atoms,  $R^3$  and  $R^4$ , which may be identical or different, are hydrogen atoms, alkyl groups containing one to four carbon atoms or alkoxy groups, and  $X^1$  and  $X^2$ , which may be identical or different, are -OH or -OMe, and

the Lewis acid is represented by  $MY_n$ , wherein M is  $[[Cu,]]$  Zn, Fe, Sc or a lanthanoid element, Y is a halogen atom, OAc,  $OCOCF_3$ ,  $ClO_4$ ,  $SbF_6$ ,  $PF_6$  or  $OSO_2CF_3$  and n is 2 or 3.